



Report to the Legislature

Disability Lifeline as required by Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6444, Section 207 (5(a)(b)) 2010 Supplemental Budget

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Disability Lifeline

In March 2010, the Washington State Legislature passed House Bill 2782, “Security Lifeline Act,” ending the General Assistance program and creating the new Disability Lifeline program. This program provides cash and medical assistance to adults who cannot work and who do not have dependent children.

Section 207 (5(a)(b)) of ESSB 6444 requires the Department of Social and Health Services to report the following information regarding the Disability Lifeline program (formerly known as the General Assistance program) to the Legislature:

- Whether expenditures for the Disability Lifeline-Unemployable (DL-U) grants in Fiscal Year 2011 will exceed \$69,648,000 for Fiscal Year 2011 in the 2010 supplemental operating budget by three percent or more; and
- Regulations proposed for adoption that would modify the Disability Lifeline incapacity determination and progressive evaluation process.

Grant Expenditures

Recent data available for the DL-U program indicates that expenditures will not exceed the proviso amount of \$69,648,000 by three percent. However, caseload fluctuation may cause the DL-U grant expenditures to exceed the proviso amount by more than three percent. The data supporting this analysis includes the forecasted caseloads and expenditures for June 2010 and actual caseloads and expenditures for July 2010. The June forecast assumes a September 2010 implementation regarding time limits, Administrative Review Team (ART), and chemical dependency changes that were calculated into the 2010 Supplemental Budget.

Several factors may impact appropriated expenditures. Recent experience in the Community Services Offices in the months of August and September indicates that far fewer clients than were estimated are exiting DL-U. Many are being extended or re-instated because of their incapacity and more clients are moving to DL-Expedited Medical. This experience will not show in the caseload data until at least October. At this point, it is likely that before the end of fiscal year 2011, the DL-U program will exceed the amount specified in the proviso by more than three percent.

To date, the department has not proposed for adoption any rules to modify the Disability Lifeline incapacity determination and progressive evaluation process. The department filed an emergency rule (CR 103 E) to repeal the social and vocational changes that were scheduled to go into effect May 1, 2010. The emergency rule (WSR 10-10-112) was published on May 4, 2010 by the Office of Code Reviser and expired on September 1, 2010. The department filed a second emergency rule (WSR 10-16-148) that was published on August 4, 2010 by the Office of the Code Reviser. The emergency rule expires on December 2, 2010.

The department filed a preproposal CR 101 (WSR 10-09-074) and a CR 102 (WSR 10-13-158) on June 23, 2010 to eliminate the Administrative Review Team and remove obsolete terminology and functional assessment language in WAC, as allowed under ESSB 6444. The public hearing took place on August 10, 2010. The department is reviewing comments received during the review period.